

April 2, 2013

To: Members of the House of Representatives and the Senate
From: Patricia Sharp, resident of the Mt. Hood village of Welches
RE: House Bill 2549

As a resident of rural Clackamas County I request that you support HB Bill 2549 which gives rural residents of the county representation on an ACT. This is important to rural residents because ODOT has decided that from 2013 forward ACTs will be the main voice for communicating prioritized transportation needs throughout Oregon. To leave any group of residents out of an ACT is to deny equal opportunity to access funding for transportation projects.

Some voices in opposition to this request contend that rural Clackamas County residents are represented by METRO. METRO was created to represent citizens inside the urban growth boundary. Only the major cities in Clackamas county have representation, not small towns and rural areas.

When ODOT formed a STIP (Statewide Transportation Improvement Program Project Selection Committee) for Clackamas County, it mandated that all positions be filled by the urban cities and businesses in the county. Despite a request from rural Clackamas residents for representation on the STIP, they were entirely ignored despite 6 years of effort to form an ACT.

The Commissioners of Clackamas County have been very supportive of the request of its rural citizens for formation of this ACT. Our voice is important as our rural roads provide agricultural and forest products to the Portland/Metro area and provide access to recreational opportunities (Mt. Hood) for all state residents and tourists.

Thank you for considering this opportunity to equalize representation on ACTs in our state by extending the opportunity to the only rural area in the state that has no representative body.